Comedy Effaces the Corpse In Warner's 'Stage Fright'

By Jay Carmody

Alfred Hitchcock's murders are at their best when he does them in a jolly mood.

That is the flavor of the one in "Stage Fright," the latest Hitchcock screenplay, now at the Warner. It is a welcome change for the master who has been rather sober recently in dealing with his aristocratic corpses. It would be even more welcome if Hitchcock had been sharper in his editing*

Where and When

Current Theater Attractions

and Time of Showing

STAGE.

SCREEN.

Dupont-"Tight Little Island";

Playhouse-"The Third Man";

Trans-Lux-"The Red Shoes":

Warner-"Stage Fright"; 11

... supper

and his orchestra

in the Metronome Room

from 9 to 1 without cover

charge at the famous

dancing

a.m., 1:05, 3:15, 5:20, 7:30 and

9:45 p.m.

7:40 and 9:55 p.m.

even though this might have sliced away some corking acting intervals by a glittering cast.

The latter, indeed, is an all-star The CAST T

The latter, indeed, is an all-star Eve Gill THE CAL The latter, indeed, is an all-star affair with Jane Wyman and Marsaffair with Jane Wyman and Charlotte Inwood Marlene Dietrich Smith Michael Wilding Jonathan Cooper Richard Todd Mrs. Gill Dame Spin Thorndike Such brilliant English players as Michael Wilding, Richard Todd, Alastair Sim and Dame Sybil Inspector Byard Attendant Joyce Grenfell Inspector Byard Andre Morell Chubby Patricia Hitchcock Commodore Gill Alistair Sim Thorndyke.

Hitchcock's direction brings out the best in each of these and that's an aggregate of good acting which does a lot to atone for the overlength and casual tempo of "Stage Fright."

It is comedy, not melodrama, New Gayety — "A Streetcar Named Desire"; 8:30 p.m. that Hitchcock chooses to accent in "Stage Fright."

since the corpse is the husband of p.m. a notoriously amorous actress. Obviously, no one could take that certainly no one does in "Stage p.m. Stage shows: 1, 3:45, 6:30 television. Fright." True, it stirs an occa- and 9:15 p.m. sional vapor of suspense, which Columbia — "Three Came tion in New York. the Hitchcock formula must have. Home"; 11 a.m., 1:10, 3:20, 5:30, but these are mostly incidental.

Miss Dietrich, the most ageless woman anyone ever saw, plays the 11 a.m., 12:50, 2:40, 4:30, 6:20, flamboyant musical comedy star. 8:15 and 10:10 p.m. She is introduced clad in a blood Keith's-"Francis"; 11:15 a.m., stained frock which she wears to 1:20, 3:25, 5:30, 7:40 and 9:45 p.m. the apartment of her young para- Little - "Tight Little Island"; mour in the hope that he will get 11 a.m., 12:50, 2:40, 4:30, 6:20, rid of the dress and the other 8:15 and 10:10 p.m. evidence which might interfere Metropolitan - "Riding High"; 11:15 a.m., 1:15, 3:20, 5:25, 7:25 with her career.

This is a sound assumption on and 9:35 p.m. her part. The lad, played by National—"The Heiress"; 11 Todd, is so willing to help that a.m., 12:55, 3:05, 5:15, 7:25 and he recruits Miss Wyman to assist. 9:35 p.m. She, a stage-struck girl with a fancy for the lad herself, adds her indulgent. irresponsible father 7:50 and 9:50 p.m. indulgent, irresponsible father (Alastair Sim) to the group trying 9:30 and 11:25 a.m., 1:25, 3:25, to shield Miss Dietrich from this 5:25, 7:35 and 9:40 p.m. exaggerated effect of her merry Pix—"Brief Encounter"; 3:50, promiscuity. 6:50 and 9:50 p.m.

Once he gets this defense team organized, Hitchcock brings in 11:30 a.m., 2, 4:35, 7:10 and 9:40 Scotland Yard, never more deb-onairly than in the person of we Actor Wilding.

Selwyn Jepson's novel, adapted for the screen by Whitfield Cook is pat enough to have been written with a Hitchcock film version as the author's purpose. It has all of the basic ingredients

of one of the master's scripts. These include a flashy west-end theater where Miss Dietrich can sing such a torchy song as "The Laziest Girl in Town," her fashionable house which makes a corpse look especially dramatic, an easy-going pub full of Hitchcock characters, a lonely house on a spit of land, and any other

background a man could want. The characters are even more ideally suited to their purposes in "Stage Fright."

Miss Dietrich's amorous actress is a woman clearly born to inspire homicide. And, having inspired it, she carries it off with an easy grace which makes it seem bad manners that Scotland Yard should bother her about it. It has been a long time since she has had such a grateful role, but good as she is, it does not let her walk away with the picture.

Miss Wyman's blundering, stage-struck girl who fancies herself as being able to outwit London's most expert crime hunters is a refreshing heroine who more than holds her own in the competition. She and the urbane Wilding have a field day with some of the best comedy dialogue that moviegoers have had in a long

Todd, as the hunted man, adds another lustrous bit, and the droll Sim plays a philosophic father who is as surely to be remembered as some of the detectives he has impersonated in the past. Dame Sybil gives an acting lesson to those other actresses you have seen lately trying to portray feather-brained elderly

"Stage Fright" covers a lot of territory before the corpse is avenged, most of it at a slower pace than is customary in Hitchcock pictures. Each of its scenes is a polished gem, a raindrenched garden party here, a nonsensical tea gathering there. and a fine menacing sequence just before the fadeout.

Even Hitchcock could not make up his mind which ones might be sacrificed. "Stage Fright" would have been better could he have done so.

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COMEDY CONTINUES - Garole in "Tight Little Island," the popular comedy which concludes its run at the Dupont tomorrow after four weeks and continues at the Little, where it also has been running four

A Working 'Rest'

HOLLYWOOD. Steve Cochran, movie tough guy, is spending half his "vacation" on Ambassador - "Stage Fright"; a farm near Escondido, Calif., a This is the smart thing to do 1:05, 3:10, 5:15, 7:25 and 9:35 novel homestead where guests pay for the privilege of milking cows. feeding livestock and plowing the Capitol-"Samson and Delilah": 10:45 a.m., 1:30, 4:15, 7 and 9:45 south forty. No telephone, no

Cochran, understandably, will spend the second half of his vaca-

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Hollywood Diary

Jane Russell is wanted by Clark That's a long time." Gable and his partner, Z. Wayne Glenn Ford will have three lead- witch. Even Margaret O'Brien Griffin, as the girl for Clark in ing ladies in his European picture, looks a wee bit haggard on kine-"Lone Star." That combination "Watching the Trains Go By." It scope. would really sizzle on the screen, will be in three sequences—Lon- Yvonne De Carlo wasn't in any Clark put up half the money- don, Monte Carlo and Italy. The danger when fire broke out on around \$40,000-to buy this story gals will be English, French and the set of "Desert Hawk." But which he and Griffin will make in- Italian. Leo Genn has the other 50 horses started to stampede. dependently for Metro release. top male role.

Eleanor Powell will be co- Brian Aherne, back in Santa exit! starred in a musical with Jane Monica after doing a television (Released By North American Newspaper Powell. Producer Joe Pasternak in- show in New York, tells me, tended to wait for the reaction to "When it's all added up, tlevision Eleanor's dance number in "Duch- in New York is just a rat race. ess of Idaho" before selling his They'll have to come to Holly-Metro bossses on the real-life Pow- wood. And it will have to be done ells playing sisters in a musical. on film." Now we will have to But the applause for Eleanor at wait until Hollywood producers brielle Hunt has an important the sneak preview was so deafen- accept instead of fight this new do any selling. She's in. "The

ing that Pasternak didn't have to medium of entertainment. thing that thriled me," says Ellie, Greta Garbo, incidentally, has "is that they remembered me. I've just refused an offer of \$50,000



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AVALON Olivia de Havilland. Montgomery Clift in "The Heiress." at 6:45, 9:05.

AVE. GRAND Double Feature.
"Hangmen Also Die." 6:25, 9:30: Roddy
McDowall. "Killer Shark." 8:10.

BEVERLY Jane Powell, Ann Sothern in 'Nancy Goes to Rio." at 1:25, 3:25, 5:20, 7:20, 9:20.

CALVERT-PENN Broderick "All the King's Men." at 1, 3:05, 5:10, 7:20, 9:25.

CENTRAL Double Feature. Charles In "Man on the Elife! Tower," at 11. 2:25. 5:55. 8:25; Groucho Marx in "Copacabana," at 12:55, 4:25, 7:55.

COLONY Larry Parks, Barbara Hale in "Jolson Sings Again." at 6, 7:50, 9:40.

HOME David Brian, "Intruder in the Dust," 6:45, 9:45; Lee Gorcey in "Blonde Dynamite," 8:05.

KENNEDY Dan Dailey in "When Willie Comes Marching Home," at 1:15, 3:20, 5:25, 7:30, 8:30.

MacARTHUR Tyrone Power, Orson Welles in
"Prince of Foxes," at 7:05, 9:40;

SAVOY Double Feature, Groucho
6:15, 9:35; Roddy McDowall in
"Killer Shark," at 8:20,

SECO Double Feature, Tim Holt in
"Storm Over Wyoming," at
6:20, 8:50; Donald Woods in "Barbary Pirate," at 7:20, 9:50.

SHERIDAN Humphrey Bogart in "Chain Lightning." at 2, 3:55, 5:50, 7:45, 9:40.

TAKOMA Double Feature. Spencer Tracy, James Stewart in "Malaya," at 6:30, 9:30; Alexis Smith in "One Last Flina," at 8:15.

UPTOWN Tyrone Power. Orson Welles in "Prince of Foxes." at 1. 3:05. 5:15. 7:25, 9:35.

YORK Double Feature. Gregory Peck in "12 O'Clock High," at 6, 9:30; Bing Crosby in "Down Memory Lane," at 8:10.

APEX 4813 Moss. Ave. N.W.
WO. 4600

First Uptown Showing Academy
Award Winner: "ALL THE KINGS
MEN" with BRODERICK CRAWFORD and MERCEDES McCAMBRIDGE at 1, 3:05, 5:15, 7:25,
9:35.

ATLAS 1331 H St. N.E. AT. 8300

First Northeast Showing—The Academy Award Winners: "ALL THE KINGS MEN" with BRODERICK CRAWPORD, MERCEDES McCAMBRIDGE 1, 3:06, 5:12, 7:28, 9:24.

FLOWER Piney Branch Rd. and Flower Ave. JU. 7-7017
Doors Open 6:30: TYRONE POWER, ORSON WELLES "PRINCE OF FOXES." 7:25. 9:40.

SENATOR Minn. Ave. of Benning Rd. N.E. 1U. 4-2600 The Academy Award Winner: "ALL THE KING'S MEN," with BRODER-ICK CRAWFORD, at 1, 3:15, 5:21, 8:34, 9:47.

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3, 5:10. 7:25, 9:40.

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WA. 9746—Two Hits!
Last Day: IDA LUPINO. HOWARD DUFF, STEPHEN MCNALLY in "WO-MAN" IN HIDING" plus GREGORY PECK in "TWELVE O'CLOCK HIGH."
Last double feature 8:25.

HYATTSVILLE Baltimore Blvd. Hyattsville, Md. Hyatts. 0552. Free Parking. Last Day: THE ACADEMY AWARD PICTURE! BRODERICK CRAWFORD in "ALL THE KING'S MEN" at 6:50. 9:21.

CHEVERLY Defense Highway at Lendover Rd., Md.
UN. 0100. Free Parking. Last Day: Two Hits! Charles Laughton, Franchot Tone. Burkess Merredith in "Man on the Eiffel Tower" (Color) plus Errol Flynn, Alexis Smith. S. Z. Sakell in "Montana" (Technicolor). Last double feature 8:10.

MARLBORO Upper Mariboro, Md. Mari. 9875. Last day: The Academy Award Picture! BRODERICK CRAWPORD in "ALL THE KING'S MEN" at 7, 9:07.

THE VILLAGE 1307 R. I. Ave.
BRODERICK CRAWFORD, MERCEDES MCCAMBRIDGE in "ALL THE
KING'S MEN" at 6:51, 9:31. NEWTON 12th & Newton Sts. N.E TYRONE POWER. WANDA HENDRIX in "PRINCE OF FOXES," at 6:50, 9:28. JESSE THEATER 18th & Irving Sts.. N.E.

Phone DU. 9861
GREGORY PECK HUGH MARLOWE in "TWELVE O'CLOCK HIGH" at 6. 9:36. RANDOLPH SCOTT. FOREST TUCKER in "THE NEVADAN." 8:15.

E VERNON 3707 Mt. Vernon Ave., Alex., Vo. block from Presidential Gardens Phone Alex. 2124 BRODERICK CRAWFORD. MERCEDES McCAMBRIDGE in "ALL THE KING'S MEN" at 6:55. 9:25. ACADEMY 535 8th St. S.Er LI. 3.9616
GEORGE RAFT. PAT O'BRIEN in "DANGEROUS PROFESSION." 7.59.
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CONGRESS 2931 Nichols Ave. S.E. ANN SOTHERN and JANE POWELL in "NANCY GOES TO RIO" (Technicolor) at 6:15, 8, 9:45. ANACOSTIA 1415 Good Hope Rd. TYRONE POWER and WANDA HENDRIX in "PRINCE OF FOXES." at 1:10, 3:10, 5:10, 7:10, 9:10. CORAL Mariboro Pike at Dist. Line
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